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A DISCOURSE ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS.

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I tell a riddle. There is an unknown known, and there is a known unknown; and I tell the answer. The unknown known is the philosophy of savagery; the known unknown is the philosophy of civilization. In those stages of culture that we call savagery and barbarism, all things are known—supposed to be known; but when at last something is known, understood, explained, then to those who have that knowledge in full comprehension, all other things become unknown. Then is ushered in the era of investigation and discovery; then science is born; then is the beginning of civilization. The philosophy of savagery is complete; the philosophy of civilization fragmentary. Ye men of science, ye wise fools, ye have discovered the law of gravity, but ye cannot tell what gravity is. But savagery has a cause and a method for all things; nothing is left unexplained.

In the lower stages of savagery the cosmos is bounded by the great plain of land and sea on which we tread, and the firmament, the azure surface above, set with brilliants; and beyond is an abyss of—nothing. Within these bounds all things are known, all things are explained; there are no mysteries but the whims of the gods. But when the plain on which we tread becomes a portion of the surface of a great globe, and the domed firmament becomes the heavens, stretching beyond Alcyone and Sirius, with this enlargement of the realm of philosophy, the verity of philosophy is questioned. The savage is a positive man; the scientist is a doubting man. And so we come back to our riddle; there is an unknown known, and there is a known unknown. But no more of riddles.

SAVAGERY IS ETHNIC CHILDHOOD.

The opinions of a savage people are childish. Society grows! Some say society develops; others that society evolves; but some-

how I like to say it *grows*. The history of the discovery of growth is a large part of the history of human culture. That individuals grow, that the child grows to be a man, the colt a horse, the scion a tree, is easily recognized, though with unassisted eye the processes of growth are not discovered. But that races grow—races of men, races of animals, races of plants, races or groups of worlds—is a very late discovery, and still all of us do not grasp so great a thought.

Consider that stage of culture where growth of individuals is not fully recognized. That stage is savagery. To-day the native races of North America are agitated by discussions over that great philosophic question, “Do the trees grow or were they created?” That the grass grows they admit, but the orthodox philosophers stoutly assert that the forest pines and the great sequoias were created as they are. Thus in savagery the philosophers dispute over the immediate creation or development of individuals; in civilization over the immediate creation or development of races. I know of no single fact that better illustrates the wide difference between these two stages of culture. But let us look for other terms of comparison. The scalping scene is no more the true picture of savagery than the bayonet charge of civilization. Savagery is sylvan life. Contrast Ka-ni-ga with New York. Ka-ni-ga is an Indian village in the Rocky Mountains. New York is, well—New York. The home in the forest is a shelter of boughs; the home in New York is a palace of granite. The dwellers in Ka-ni-ga are clothed in the skins of animals, rudely tanned, rudely wrought, and colored with daubs of clay. For the garments of New York, flocks are tended, fields are cultivated, ships sail on the sea, and men dig in the mountains for dye stuffs stored in the rocks. The industries of Ka-ni-ga employ stone knives, bone awls and human muscle; the industries of New York employ the tools of the trades, the machinery of the manufactories, and the power of the sun—for water power is but sunshine, and the coal mine is but a pot of pickled sunbeams.

Even the nursery rhymes are in contrast; the prattler in New York says:

“ Daffydowndilly
Has come up to town,
With a green petticoat
And a blue gown ; ”

but in savagery the outer and nether garments are not yet differentiated. And more: blue and green are not differentiated, for the Indian sees but one color, and has but one name; the green grass

and the blue heavens are of the same hue to the Indian eye. But the nursery tales of Ka-ni-ga are of the animals, for the savages associate with the animals on terms of recognized equality ; and this is what the prattler in Ka-ni-ga says :

“The little red ant
That lives under the hill,
The little red ant
That lives under the hill,
Has only one arrow
In his quiver.”

The arts and industries of savagery and civilization are not in greater contrast than their philosophy. To fully present to you the condition of savagery, as illustrated in their philosophy, three obstacles appear. After all the years I have spent among the Indians in their mountain villages, I am not certain that I have sufficiently divorced myself from the thoughts and ways of civilization to properly appreciate their childish beliefs. The second obstacle subsists in your own knowledge of the methods and powers of nature, and the ways of civilized society ; and when I attempt to tell you what an Indian thinks, I fear you will never fully forget what you know, and thus you will be led to give too deep a meaning to a savage explanation ; or, on the other hand, contrasting an Indian concept with your own, the manifest absurdity will sound to you as an idle tale too simple to deserve mention, or too false to deserve credence. The third difficulty lies in the attempt to put savage thoughts into civilized language ; our words are so full of meaning, carry with them so many great thoughts and collateral ideas. In English I say “wind,” and you think of atmosphere in revolution with the earth, heated at the tropics and cooled at the poles, and set into great currents that are diverted from their courses in passing back and forth from tropical to polar regions ; you think of ten thousand complicating conditions by which local currents are produced, and the word suggests all the lore of the weather bureau—that great triumph of American science. But I say *neir* to a savage, and he thinks of a great monster, a breathing beast beyond the mountains of the west.

I speak of meteors, and you think of these wanderers of space finding rest at last on the bosom of mother earth. I say *kvechup-putsiv* to a savage, and he thinks of the excrement of dirty little star-gods.

We must, if we would fully understand Indian philosophy, leave

that realm of thought where the sun is a great orb swinging in circles through the heavens, where the winds drift in obedience to cosmic laws, where falling stars reveal the constitution of the heavens, and go to that lower realm where the sun is but a little beast cowed by the heroic mien of a rabbit, and, in very fear, compelled to travel along in an appointed trail through the firmament, like an ass in a treadmill; where the wind is but breath, foul or fair, ejected from the belly of a monster; and where the falling star is but dung.

In treating of savage philosophy, I shall speak of their cosmology, theology, religion and mythology.

COSMOLOGY.

Systems of Worlds.—Their cosmology is not always cosmogony. Some of the objects in the universe are supposed to have had an origin—to have been created; but many others to have had everlasting existence. They are accepted as facts or existences without origin—primary concepts, if you please.

A savage philosopher believes in a system of worlds, not globes swinging in the heavens, but places of existence—the world of this life, the land on which we tread and the water in which we swim—and the world or worlds of land and water to which we go. Among the different tribes of North America, two methods in the arrangements of worlds are observed. The lower tribes have their worlds all arranged horizontally or topographically; Nu-gun-tu-wip, the ghost land, the land of the hereafter, is beyond some great topographic feature. The coast tribes say “beyond the sea;” the dweller on the river banks, “beyond the river;” tribes who dwell in valleys surrounded by crags and peaks say, “beyond the mountains;” the tribes who dwell on the brink of the great canons, “beyond the chasm.” Among those tribes having their worlds arranged topographically, a past world is not an item in their philosophy; with some the progenitors of the human race, with all the animal races, came from the ground, where they burrowed in miserable existence. With other tribes the progenitors of the human race, with the races of animals, came from the depths of the sea. There are always two future worlds—one for the good, one for the bad—a land of joy and a land of sorrow.

When the future world is “beyond the chasm,” the way is by a magical bridge; when “beyond the mountains,” by a dangerous

pass among the rocks; when "beyond the river," or "beyond the sea," a ferry is provided.

Among the higher tribes, we find the worlds arranged vertically, or architecturally; a world or worlds below—a world or worlds above. In this higher stage of savagery there is also a past world; that is, humanity came to this existence from a former, another land. Sometimes this previous land is above, sometimes below. But the land to which the righteous man goes is always in a direction opposite to that from which he came.

Thus among the Pueblo Indians there are seven worlds—one world below this and five above. We came from the world below by a magical ladder held by Ma-chi-to, one of their hero gods, who had previously discovered a hole in the sky from that lower world—the floor of this world, the sky of the lower. The souls of the newly born have escaped from below to be clothed with bodies here, and the souls of the righteous shall go on from world to world until the bliss of the seventh heaven is reached.

I must content myself with this brief account of the worlds of savagery, though the theme is attractive by reason of the many wonderful myths told of these worlds.

The Heavenly Bodies.—The sun and moon are always personages; with nomadic tribes primordial personages, uncreated personages, but slaves compelled to travel in appointed ways. They have been subjugated. The freedom to roam at will is a franchise dear to the sylvan man. What a wearied existence those shining beasts of the firmament must have, to travel in the same trail, in monotonous regularity, day by day through long years! With the Pueblo tribes the sun and the moon are personages created for a purpose—to give light and warmth.

The stars of the nomads are human beings or animals translated from the earth to the firmament for various reasons; but the stars of the Pueblos were created from the fragments remaining when the moon was made.

Meteorologic Phenomena.—Indian cosmology also deals with all the meteorologic phenomena. The aurora is the dancing of ghosts; the rainbow is made of the tears of the eagle god; the thunder is the screaming of a great bird; the lightning is the arrow of Ta-vwots, the hare god. Rain and snow are variously explained. Among the Pueblos the rain-god dips his brush, made from the feathers of the birds of heaven, into the lakes of the skies, and sprinkles the water therefrom over the face of this world. In winter time he breaks the ice of the lakes and scatters ice-dust over the earth.

Geographic Phenomena.—Their cosmology explains the origin of mountains; each mountain had a special creation; the shapes of all the storm-carved rocks were determined by the gods; the great bends of the rivers were fixed; the lakes were made, and the springs had a miraculous beginning.

Remarkable Facts in Nature.—Their cosmology also deals with all the curious minutiae of nature. It explains the tawny patch of fur on the shoulder of the little rabbit, the cardinal head of the wood-pecker, the top-knot of the crested jay, and the rattle of the serpent. So there is nothing seen that is not explained.

Important Facts of Human Society.—In like manner all the more important facts observed by them in human society, all the institutions, and all the habits and customs, have their origin, and were determined, by the gods. Every tribe has its Babel myth, its explanation of the dispersion of the human family over the earth, and the diversity of tongues. They tell when birth and death began, and when marriage was instituted.

Let me repeat a passage from a myth. It is a dialogue between two gods, the Shin-au-av brothers, the wolf-gods.

THE SHIN-AU-AV BROTHERS DISCUSS MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE PEOPLE.

Once upon a time the Shin-au-av brothers met to consult about the destiny of the Nu-mas. At this meeting the younger said: "Brother, how shall these people obtain their food? Let us devise some good plan for them. I was thinking about it all night, but could not see what would be best, and when the dawn came into the sky I went to a mountain and sat on its summit, and thought a long time; and now I can tell you a good plan by which they can live. Listen to your younger brother. Look at these pine trees; their nuts are sweet; and there is the *us*, very rich; and there is the apple of the cactus, full of juice; on the plain you see the sunflower, bearing many seeds—they will be good for the nation. Let them have all these things for their food, and when they have gathered a store they shall put them in the ground, or hide them in the rocks, and when they return they shall find abundance, and having taken of them as they may need shall go on, and yet when they return a second time there shall still be plenty; and though they return many times, as long as they live the store shall never fail; and thus they will be supplied with abundance of food without toil." "Not so," said the

elder brother, "for then will the people, idle and worthless, and having no labor to perform, engage in quarrels, and fighting will ensue, and they will destroy each other, and the people will be lost to the earth; they must work for all they receive." Then the younger brother answered not, but went away sorrowing.

The next day he met the elder brother and accosted him thus: "Brother, your words were wise; let the Ute people work for their food. But how shall they be furnished with honey-dew? I have thought all night about this, and when the dawn came into the sky I sat on the summit of the mountain and did think, and now I will tell you how to give them honey-dew: Let it fall like a great snow upon the rocks, and the women shall go early in the morning and gather all they may desire, and they shall be glad." "No," replied the elder brother, "it will not be good, my little brother, for them to have much and find it without toil; for they will deem it of no more value than dung, and what we give them for their pleasure will only be wasted. In the night it shall fall in small drops on the reeds, which they shall gather and beat with clubs, and then will it taste very sweet, and having but little they will prize it the more." And the younger brother went away sorrowing, but returned the next day and said: "My brother, your words are wise; let the women gather the honey-dew with much toil, by beating the reeds."

"Brother, when one of the men or women, or a boy or a girl, or a little one dies, where shall they go? I have thought all night about this, and when the dawn came into the sky I sat on the top of the mountain and did think. Let me tell you what to do: When a man dies, send him back when the morning returns, and then will all his friends rejoice." "Not so," said the elder; "the dead shall return no more." The little brother answered him not, but bending his head in sorrow went away.

One day the younger Shin-au-av was walking in the forest, and saw his brother's son at play, and taking an arrow from his quiver slew the boy, and when he returned he did not mention what he had done. The father supposed that his boy was lost, and wandered around in the woods for many days, and at last found the dead child, and mourned his loss for a long time.

One day the younger Shin-au-av said to the elder: "You made the law that the dead should never return. I am glad that you were the first to suffer." Then the elder knew that the younger had killed his child, and he was very angry and sought to destroy him,

and as his wrath increased the earth rocked, subterraneous groanings were heard, darkness came on, fierce storms raged, lightning flashed, thunder reverberated through the heavens, and the younger brother fled in great terror to his father Ta-vwots for protection.

THEOLOGY.

I next speak of their theology—their system of gods. The theology of the North American Indians is not fetichistic, though there are many survivals from fetichism.

Beast-Gods.—All of the nomadic tribes are zooloters; their gods are animals.

The savage, the sylvan man, as the word signifies, is intimately associated with the animals with which he is surrounded. From them he obtains the larger part of his clothing, and much of his food, and he carefully studies their habits and finds out many wonderful things. Their knowledge and skill and power appear to him to be superior to his own. He sees the mountain-sheep fleet among the crags, the eagle soaring in the heavens, the humming bird poised over its blossom-cup of nectar, the serpent swift without legs, the salmon scaling the rapids, the spider weaving its gossamer web, the ant building a play-house mountain. In all animal nature he sees things too wonderful for him, and from admiration he grows to adoration, and the animals become his gods.

Another trait of character comes in to modify his theologic beliefs—I mean ancientism—veneration for the past and for the people of the past. This is a very common trait in human nature. You know there are no great men living; all the wise are dead; all the good are dead; and the men of the present are their degenerate sons. But this ancientism is much more highly developed in the savage. Everywhere the sylvan man mourns the days that are lost, the men who are gone. The burthen of every homily in an Indian camp is the degeneracy of the present time; the theme of every eulogy, the wisdom and virtue of the ancients. This ancientism appears in their theology in a very interesting manner, for it is not the animals of to-day whom they worship, but the dead animals—the ancient animals—the progenitors or prototypes of the present. Individuals of every species are supposed to have descended from the more ancient animal, the progenitor of the race, who was a wonderful being. The wolf of to-day is a howling pest, but that wolf's grandfather was a god. And so they have a grizzly-bear-god, an

eagle-god, a rattlesnake-god, a trout-god, and a spider-god—a god for every race or species of animal.

Hero-Gods.—There is another very curious and interesting fact in Indian philosophy. They do not separate man from the beast by any broad line of demarcation. Mankind is supposed simply to be one of the many races of animals; in some respects superior, in many others, inferior to those races. So the Indian speaks of “our race” as of the same rank with the bear race, the wolf race, or the rattlesnake race; and, as he deifies ancient beasts, he deifies ancient men, and thus he has a special class, which we may denominate hero-gods. Some of the earlier men and woman of the human race were wonderful people, and performed many great deeds.

Daimon-Gods.—I have said that the theology of the North American Indians was not fetichistic, but among them we find many survivals from fetichism; and one of these is a survival by special development—I mean their daimon-gods. I use the term *daimon* rather than *demon*, for the latter has a Christian meaning of “devil,” while these daimons are simply the presiding spirits of places. Thus they have the spirit or ghost of the mountain, the spirit of the river, the spirit of the lake, the spirit of the spring, the god of the east, the god of the west, the god of the north, and the god of the south, whose breath makes the winds.

It must be understood that these daimons have animal forms, but have the power of transforming themselves and assuming any shape at will, anthropomorphic or zoömorphic. This is true also of the beast-gods. They can transform themselves, and many wonderful stories are told in their mythology of such transformations. Their hero-gods also have the power of transformation and may be anthropomorphic or zoömorphic. So their daimon-gods are animals.

Firmament-Gods.—The sun, moon and stars are also gods, and do many wonderful things, though they are not usually held in very high esteem. This gives us a class which I call firmament-gods. They are also animals, and can at will transform themselves, taking the shape of men or beasts.

So all their gods are animals, and the form in which they may appear at any time is a matter of momentary whim; and these animal gods may be classed, as you will see, as firmament-gods, hero-gods, beast-gods and daimon-gods. There are two general facts concerning the gods of the Indians, which must be emphasized. First, they are zoömorphic—they are animals; and second, they are all ancient people. In most Indian languages the generic term for god is “an-

cient." In the Numa or Shoshoni language it is *c-nu-ints-i-gaip*, "ancient persons," and the equivalent of this word is found in many other languages; and there is a special declension of nouns and adjectives, and a special conjugation of verbs, used in speaking of the ancients—the gods—giving to these languages a solemn, reverential style.

Monster-Gods.—A vicious human trait, exaggeration, plays some strange freaks in Indian theology, and often their gods become monsters—beasts with seven heads and ten horns. There are three conditions favorable to the development of these monster-gods. The first is the migration of a tribe to a land where a new fauna is found. In such migration they carry with them their gods; but no longer having the animal descendants of their gods in presence to correct their descriptions and to keep them within bounds, all the important characteristics of their ancient gods steadily develop; horns are multiplied; tails are lengthened; claws grow; eyes enlarge or multiply; wings stretch out like the clouds; the serpents that could twine about a bough grow until they can twine about a mountain. The second method by which monsters are produced is in some respects like to the first, but the myth, only, travels from tribe to tribe, and it is often very difficult for us to determine whether the myth alone has traveled or not. The third class of monsters are those based on the great bones discovered—bones of extinct elephants and mastodons. With some of the tribes these mythical monsters are very important personages.

Tutelar Gods.—Avarice plays a very important part in Indian theology. The Indian has but a small store of material things, and the religious element greatly prevails in his life; and his desire for possession—ownership—is very strong; so every Indian selects a tutelar god—a "my god." Families also have tutelar gods, and so do clans and tribes. Now the clan is a widespread institution among North American Indians, the nature of which is so well known that I need not stop to explain it; but the tutelar god of a clan comes to be a very conspicuous personage, and his image, as a rude painting or carving, is taken as the badge of a clan, and this tutelar god gives name to the clan; it is the *totem*.

Such are the gods of the nomads of North America; firmament-gods, which are animals; hero-gods, animals also, as man is an animal; beast-gods, the progenitors or prototypes of the present races of animals; and daimon-gods, presiding spirits of places, also zoömaorphic.

In studying the myths of North American Indians, many have sought to evade this conclusion ; and one of our brilliant writers on the myths of the new world exclaims : " Nan, the paragon of animals, praying to the beast, is a spectacle so humiliating that, for the sake of our common humanity, we may seek the explanation of it least degrading to the dignity of our race."

There have been many curious ways of interpreting Indian myths. The latest and most attractive is that by which they are converted into wonderful symbols, so that whenever an Indian calls his god *wolf*, he does not mean "wolf," he means "wind," for the wind howls and the wolves howl ; when he says *serpent*, he does not mean "serpent," he means "lightning," for the serpent darts and the lightning darts. Now, that such symbolism has existed among people whose grades of culture is higher, cannot be denied. The fact of general nature-worship by the ancient Indo-European people is fully established, and in many ways and by divers methods a wonderful system of symbols grew up among these earlier Aryans. This nature-worship was the personification and deification of the forces and phenomena of nature. The later Greek and Roman philosophy was a personification and deification of human attributes, passions and sentiments. But in this later theology, vestiges of the earlier nature-gods are discovered. So, too, in the ancient Indo-European or Aryan nature-worship, vestiges of an earlier theology appear, and that earlier theology was a deification of animals, a theology still extant among the North American nomads ; and in this last-mentioned system the vestiges of one still more primitive appear, for in it relics of fetichism are found. Indian theology is not a degeneracy from monotheism. It is not a degeneracy from that polytheism prevailing among classical nations, where human attributes were deified. It is not a degeneracy from that earlier polytheism where the forces and phenomena of nature were deified. The Indian gods are animal-gods, and the Indian religion, zoölatry—a development from fetichism.

The literature of North American ethnography is vast, and scattered through it is a great mass of facts pertaining to Indian theology, a mass of nonsense, a mass of incoherent folly, whenever those facts are looked upon from that standpoint which assumes that Indian theology is a degeneracy from some higher type ; but when accepted as it is understood by the Indian himself, the great multitude of facts fall into place and assume the form of a theological organism, ethically a hideous monster of lies, but ethnographi-

cally a system of great interest—a system which beautifully reveals the mental condition of savagery.

I have no time to dwell on the theology of the Pueblo Indians but simply to say that a mixture of nature and animal worship exists among them, so that they may be considered as in a transition state.

RELIGION.

I come now to speak of Indian religion, and by religion I mean the relations existing between gods and men; for religion chiefly has to do with the avenues to deity—the means of communication, the means of influencing the gods. In Indian philosophy the gods are not very far from us in intrinsic nature. They are poor brutes like ourselves, with like passions and like prejudices; quick to anger and of generous impulse; revengeful to enemy and faithful to friend. In many respects they have no greater powers than ourselves, and none of them have greater power than the ancients. The gods *are* the ancients. Our inferiority is due to our late degeneracy. The gods can transform themselves; the gods may wander through the universe untrammeled by bodies, and the gods can do many other wonderful things. And so did we a few generations ago; we also were gods, but now we are burdened with a curse. We can talk to the gods and they can hear and understand, but when they talk to us our ears are closed, for we have forgotten the ancient language. Yet they speak to us by signs and wonders in the heavens, and the groves resound with their voices; ever they are signaling to us; they appear to us in dreams by night, and when our minds are free from encumbrance of natural things they come to us in visions by day.

Priest-craft.—But only to the few are these revelations vouch-safed, and thus it is that priest-craft is specialized. Certain persons only can communicate with the gods. Three somewhat distinct classes of priests are found among all North American Indians, prophets, shamans, and witches, giving rise to prophet-craft, shaman-craft and witch-craft.

Prophets.—The prophets are the great men who rise from time to time among the tribes, men to whom the gods reveal their will concerning the destiny of the people. All of the great movements among Indian nations are inaugurated by the prophets, whose warnings are awful, whose denunciations are terrible, and whose promises are full of bliss. Pontiac was a great prophet, and faith in him was

the power by which he was enabled to organize the great Indian conspiracy. The invisible bond that held together the confederacy of forest tribes scattered from the Alleghanies to the Mississippi, and from the great lakes to the Tennessee, was the prophesies of that great chief Tecumseh. In later times, only a few years ago, within my own knowledge, a powerful and revered chief of the Pan-a-mints of western Nevada retired from his tribe and made his home among the crags of that great mountain San Bernadino. From time to time he came down among his people to preach, then again retired to dwell in his lonely home among the clouds. And his fame spread among all the Indians in the country round about. At last the years of his seclusion ended, and he set out on a pilgrimage, his mission being to tell all the people what the gods had revealed to him while he dwelt alone. The tribes of the western slope of the Sierras met him in Tulare valley and there was a great revival, the meaning of which no white man can find out. The tribes of the deserts in southern Nevada, southern Utah and southern California, met him at the foot of Nu-a'-gunt, a great mountain near the Vegas. The tribes of northern Utah, Colorado and southern Idaho met him in Utah valley. I was myself present at that meeting, but learned nothing of the revelations made by the great prophet A-vwat'-si-vwav or White Cloud, but I have seen its effect in a wide-spread revival of all the ancient dances and ceremonies, and A-vwat'-si-vwav seems to have been a prophet of peace. But usually prophets are great leaders in war.

Shamins.—The shamins are priests of a lower grade, and are usually known among white people as medicine-men. They take charge of the religious ceremonies, and practice sorcery in divers ways. One of the most important of their offices is the driving out of evil spirits. Among the Indians a disease is not supposed to be an improper working of the functions of the system, but is an entity, an evil spirit, a devil which takes possession of some part of the person and must be exorcised. The Indian therapeutic system is sorcery.

These shamins or medicine-men have great influence among the Indians, and often aspire to become prophets.

Witches.—The third and lowest grade of priests I call witches. This craft is carried on chiefly by women, though occasionally men are accused of being wizards, for witchcraft is the practice of sorcery for evil purposes. There is a very general belief that old women, unless they die at a reasonable time, are transformed into witches, and are finally carried away by whirlwinds.

Ecstasism.—The means by which prophets, shamans and witches carry on their mysterious professions are various and of great interest; chief among these is the practice of ecstasism. This is the production of an ecstatic state, a physical condition bordering on epilepsy. One of the most common methods of producing ecstasy is by fasting, another by the use of the decoction from plants, black drinks as they are usually called. Often it is by long-continued sweating and fasting and the use of black drinks. The sweat-house is a universal institution among North American Indians. It is often an underground compartment; sometimes it is built of boughs or skins like an ordinary lodge, and is properly a general assembly-chamber for council, for religious ceremonies and for convivial occasions and general gossip. These council-chambers are also sometimes used as sweat-houses, and by long-continued fasting, sweating and the use of black drinks the prophets and shamans are able to bring themselves into a most wonderful condition of ecstasy, so that their ghosts or spirits are untrammeled by their bodies and they can talk with the gods and peer into the future.

With many tribes every boy, on coming to the age of puberty, goes to the top of some mountain, to the depths of some forest, or out into the desert to fast, and remains until it is revealed to him whom he shall take for his tutelar god; and often during these conditions of ecstasy he receives revelations which largely govern his subsequent life, for the revelations of that awful hour are held most sacred. The maid, too, is initiated into the mysteries of womanhood by like practices.

Amuletism.—Among many of the religious ceremonies that prevail I must not fail to mention amuletism. This is probably a relic from fetishism, though it widely prevails in that state of religion of which we are now speaking. But amulets are not gods, they are mediators. In some ecstatic state, or in some dream, or in some other mysterious manner, every Indian finds an amulet, a curious pebble, a bone, a claw, a knot of hair, which he keeps on his person to bring him good fortune, or to keep away disease-devils.

The shamans, too, are very skillful in the decoction of sorcery-broth, usually foul mixtures that are prepared prior to engaging in any important enterprise.

Many are the religious ceremonies among the Indians—sacrifice of parts of all animals killed in the chase; prayer to the tutelar god; baptism for consecration, dancing, chanting, and a great number of peculiar ceremonies, observances and prohibitions, so that

the whole daily life of an Indian is a religious life. He is a slave to religious observances of times and methods and absurd prohibitions. He may not whistle at night lest an *u-nu-pits*, an evil spirit, should enter his mouth under cover of the darkness.

But religion also has to do with admission to the land of the hereafter. Admission to the land of want is always free; the terms of admission to the land of plenty are variously and vaguely fixed. All the living righteous, who are few, will go to the latter; all the living bad, who are many, to the former. The dead, those who lived in the happy days of yore, are almost all good, and few have been denied entrance to the home of the blessed. But who are the wicked, and who are the good? The ethic standards of savagery and civilization are as widely contrasted as their ideas of meteors. The bad man is he who failed to sacrifice to his tutelar god the spleen of the last elk killed; or he slept on his back the night before the battle, when the gods have taught him to sleep on his belly. They have some very curious soulometers!

Sometimes the good land is beyond the bad, and through the latter the ghostly traveler passes in great dismay, happily reaching the former if his savage sins have been duly propitiated and the angry gods appeased; but woe to him who dies with savage guilt resting on his ghost. Sometimes there are two ways—the angry gods lead here, the appeased gods lead there.

MYTHOLOGY.

And now I speak of Indian mythology. In every Indian tribe there is a great body of story lore; tales purporting to be the saying and doings, the history, of the ancients—the gods. Every tribe has one or more persons skilled in the relation of these stories—preachers. In all the Shoshoni tribes the preacher is called a *nar-i-gwi-nump*, “one who tells of the ancients.” The long winter evenings are set apart for this purpose. Then the men and women, the boys and girls, gather about the camp-fire to listen to the history of the ancients, to a chapter in the unwritten Bible of savagery. Such a scene is of the deepest interest. A camp-fire of blazing pine or sage-boughs illumines a group of dusky faces intent with expectation, and the old man begins his story, talking and acting; the elders receiving his words with reverence, while the younger persons are played upon by the actor, until they shiver with fear or dance with delight. An Indian is a great actor. The conditions

of Indian life train them in natural sign-language. Among the two hundred and fifty or three hundred thousand Indians in the United States, there are scores of languages, so that often a language is spoken by only a few hundred or a few score of people; and as a means of communication between tribes speaking different languages, a sign-language has sprung up, so that an Indian is able to talk all over—with the features of his face, his hands and feet, the muscles of his body; and thus a skillful preacher talks and acts; and inspired by a theme which treats of the gods, he sways his savage audience at will. And ever as he tells his story he points a moral—the mythology, theology, religion, history and all human duties are taught. This *naru-gwi-nai*, this preaching, is one of the most important institutions of savagery. The whole body of myths current in a tribe is the sum total of their lore—their philosophy, their miraculous history, their authority for their governmental institutions, their social institutions, their habits and customs—it is their unwritten bible.

In a single lecture I cannot introduce many of these tales; one or two must suffice for illustration.

ORIGIN OF THE ECHO.

I'-o-wi (the turtle dove) was gathering seeds in the valley, and her little babe slept. Wearied with carrying it on her back, she laid it under the *ti-hó-pi* (sage bush) in care of its sister O-hó-chu (the summer yellowbird.) Engaged in her labors, the mother wandered away to a distance, when a *tsó-a-vwits* (witch) came and said to the little girl, "Is that your brother?" and O-hó-chu answered, "This is my sister," for she had heard that witches preferred to steal boys, and did not care for girls. Then the *tsó-a-vwits* was angry and chided her, saying that it was very naughty for girls to lie; and she put on a strange and horrid appearance, so that O-hó-chu was stupefied with fright, and then the *tsó-a-vwits* ran away with the boy, carrying him to her home on a distant mountain. Then she laid him down on the ground, and, taking hold of his right foot, she stretched the baby's leg until it was as long as that of a man, and she did the same to the other leg; then his body was elongated; she stretched his arms, and behold the baby was as large as a man. And the *tsó-a-vwits* married him and had a husband, which she had long desired; but, though he had the body of a man, he had the heart of a babe, and knew no better than to marry a witch.

Now, when I'-o-wi returned and found not her babe under the ti-hó-pi, but learned from O-hó-chu that it had been stolen by a tsó-a-vwits, she was very angry, and punished her daughter very severely. Then she went in search of the babe for a long time, mourning as she went, and crying and still crying, refusing to be comforted, though all her friends joined her in the search, and promised to revenge her wrongs.

Chief among her friends was her brother Kwi-na (the eagle), who traveled far and wide over all the land until one day he heard a strange noise and coming near saw the tsó-a-vwits and U-ja (the sage-cock), her husband, but he did not know that this large man was indeed the little boy who had been stolen. Yet he returned and related to I'-o-wi what he had seen, who said: "If that is indeed my boy he will know my voice." So the mother came near to where the tsó-a-vwits and U-ja were living and climbed into a cedar tree and mourned and cried continually. Kwi-na placed himself near by on another tree to observe what effect the voice of the mother would have on U-ja, the tsó-a-vwits' husband. When he heard the cry of his mother U-ja knew the voice and said to the tsó-a-vwits, "I hear my mother, I hear my mother, I hear my mother," but she laughed at him and persuaded him to hide.

Now the tsó-a-vwits had taught U-ja to hunt, and a short time before he had killed a mountain-sheep which was lying in camp. The witch emptied the contents of the stomach and with her husband took refuge within, for she said to herself, "Surely I'-o-wi will never look in the paunch of a mountain-sheep for my husband." In this retreat they were safe for a long time, so that they who were searching were sorely puzzled at the strange disappearance. At last Kwi-na said, "They are hid somewhere in the ground, may be, or under the rocks; after a long time they will be very hungry and will search for food; I will put some in a tree so as to tempt them." So he killed a rabbit and put it on the top of a tall pine, from which he trimmed the branches and peeled the bark so that it would be very difficult to climb, and he said, "When these hungry people come out they will try to climb that tree for food and it will take much time, and while the tsó-a-vwits is thus engaged we will carry U-ja away." So they watched some days until the tsó-a-vwits was very hungry and her baby-hearted husband cried for food, and she came out from their hiding place and sought for something to eat. The odor of the meat placed on the tree came to her nostrils, and she saw where it was and tried to climb up but

fell back many times; and while so doing Kwi-na, who had been sitting on a rock near by and had seen from where she came, ran to the paunch which had been their house and taking the man carried him away and laid him down under the very same ti-hó-pi from which he had been stolen, and, behold, he was the same beautiful little babe that I'-o-wi had lost.

And Kwi-na went off into the sky and brought back a storm and caused the wind to blow and the rain to beat upon the ground so that his tracks were covered and the tsó-a-vwits could not follow him, but she saw lying upon the ground near by some eagle feathers and knew well who it was that had deprived her of her husband, and she said to herself, "Well, I know Kwi-na is the brother of I'-o-wi, he is a great warrior and a terrible man; I will go to To-go-a (the rattlesnake), my grandfather, who will protect me and kill my enemies."

To-go-a was enjoying his midday sleep on a rock, and as the tsó-a-vwits came near her grandfather awoke and called out to her, "Go back, go back, you are not wanted here, go back!" But she came on begging his protection, and while they were still parleying they heard Kwi-na coming and To-go-a said, "Hide, hide!" But she knew not where to hide and he opened his mouth and the tsó-a-vwits crawled into his stomach. This made To-go-a very sick and he entreated her to crawl out, but she refused for she was in great fear. Then he tried to throw her up, but could not and he was sick nigh unto death. At last, in his terrible retchings, he crawled out of his own skin and left the tsó-a-vwits in it, and she imprisoned there rolled about and hid in the rocks. When Kwi-na came near he shouted, "Where are you, old tsó-a-vwits? where are you, old tsó-a-vwits? She repeated his words in mockery.

Ever since that day witches have lived in snake-skins, hide among the rocks, and take great delight in repeating the words of passers by.

The white man who has lost the history of these ancient people calls these mocking cries of witches, domiciliated in snake-skins, "echoes," but the Nu-mas know the voices of the old hags.

This is the origin of the echo.